



Agency Board Meeting 29 July 2014

Board Report Number: SEPA 29/14

Chief Executive's Report

Summary:	This paper highlights areas of environmental achievement and concern, enforcement action, and major partnership activities, as well as business related issues in respect of corporate performance and activity, since the Board meeting on 27 May 2014.
Risks:	N/A
Financial Implications:	N/A
Staffing Implications:	N/A
Environmental and Carbon Impact:	N/A
Purpose of the report:	For information
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Appendices:	None

Foreword

In previous reports to the Board I've looked at the Agency's involvement in delivering sustainable development, in working in partnership with others, and in our European connectivity. For this report I'd like to concentrate specifically on the topic of engagement. Of course "engagement" is one of our three values as an organisation and, for that reason alone, makes it important to us and maintains its position as a concept we continue to think hard about and to develop.

Engagement comes in many different guises. For example, we can be quite proud of our internal staff engagement, measured by conflating several responses within our staff survey. Our engagement score stands at 79%, which is high by comparison to the public sector baseline. We have developed action plans to continue improving our staff engagement levels. Just one aspect is to ensure we deliver staff appraisals which genuinely help each of us recognise our strengths and our contributions to the Agency objectives, but which also focus on areas where we can improve – and all of us can. I'm pleased to report, by our deadline of the end of June, that 98.5% of all appraisals were completed and submitted – regrettably just short of our 100% internal target but, nonetheless, a good result. We will now turn our attention to internal quality control and hopefully improve our techniques further for the future.

Then, of course, there is a completely different facet of engagement with customers and communities. As previously done for the issues of sustainability, partnership and Europe, it is instructive to look through the following pages of this report to identify where engagement has played a role. There are around 56 operational stories this quarter and, of those, my estimation is that 23 show that SEPA has used various social engagement techniques, as distinct from partnerships, to deliver a result.

Previously the Board was instrumental in initiating the development of SEPA's engagement tools, out of which we established our lead contacts directory which now stands at 84 staff members who are established contact points for sectors as varied as the national parks, the chemical industries, European funding, and the MoD.

It is worth highlighting the award that SEPA, and its partners, recently received (see section 1.2.1) in recognition of outstanding engagement with local communities – so we can actually be good at it. In addition, there is a special update at the end of this report which summarises the very substantial enhancements to Scotland's Environment Web – which, at its heart, is all about engaging with the public all across Scotland.

But, at the most recent Agency Board meeting, when reviewing the vision for SEPA's role in Scotland's environment in 2040, a penetrating question was asked about how SEPA was going to support the delivery of wide and deep public involvement in the stewardship of the environment which is embodied in that vision.

I promised to get back to the Board.

So here's a start....

At my request, and directly as a result of the discussion at the Board about our capacity to engage purposefully with communities, SEPA's strategic leaders group recently explored community engagement; what it means for SEPA and how we should take it forward. It focused particularly on how we can align with our high level vision for SEPA and how we will ensure Scotland's environment is valued, protected and enhanced in the long term.

Just to recap, the visioning work with the Board articulated a future where, “*The people of Scotland have taken increasing responsibility for their own environment and well-being. This is supported by accessible information and transparent decision making which ensure that a joined-up approach to health and well-being is achieved through active dialogue, whereby individuals and communities engage and are involved in decisions that affect them.*” That sounds nice but is arguably a long way from where we are as a nation currently.

Another recent and important overarching consideration is the impact of the new Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill, which, if enacted, will give a strong mandate to public sector agencies to engage at a community planning level, and conversely for communities to have an opportunity to help shape and deliver outcomes for services that will affect their lives.

So, an opportunity presents itself for SEPA to take a lead in considering how new, participatory approaches can be successfully embedded into our business and how we can work constructively and in fruitful partnership with Scotland’s citizens and communities to help address multi-faceted and multi-generational environmental problems, or “wicked” problems as they’ve become known. It requires careful thought to ensure we maximise the benefit from the limited resources we may have to achieve this goal.

The strategic leaders’ workshop heard about inspiring and successful community engagement approaches adopted in Edinburgh from Superintendent Matt Richards, who has responsibility for Partnership Operations at Police Scotland. The workshop then split into three groups to consider: current levels and types of engagement and what direction we need to travel in order to meet the recommendations of the Christie Commission and the four pillars of public service reform: people, performance, partnership and prevention.

I’ve summarised here some of the outcomes resulting from the session.

The workshop found that there was a range of current engagement commitment activity. In brief, these are in the following areas:

Corporate Value: Engagement – Engagement is one of SEPA’s values and it features in our vision and wider strategic objectives, while we engage in many areas both formally and informally, our commitment and ambition reflected in the value is not necessarily matched by tangible and effective community engagement action across our activities.

Citizen Engagement through Citizen Science – SEPA has a commitment to citizen science and there has been some significant work in this area, and is an area we can build upon.

Operational Community Engagement – There is considerable engagement with communities across our operational activities but it is sometimes reactive or limited in scope.

Community Planning Partnerships – There has been some engagement through CPPs, although the 2013 internal review of SEPA’s community planning work found engagement was also *ad hoc* and inconsistent.

Social Productivity Approach – There has been considerable work to help understand the nature of the challenges ahead if we are to embrace the four pillars of public service reform effectively; a key component of this work has been how we engage, ensuring productive two-way engagement.

The workshop went on to consider where SEPA needs to take future action in order to enhance its engagement. Four key areas were highlighted:

Route to engagement - we should look carefully at the route we take, and look to others who may be better placed to engage, and aim to work with them as a conduit where possible.

Create environment for engagement - make sure that the right environment for effective engagement is put in place.

Clarity on purpose of engagement - SEPA needs to be very clear on why it is seeking to engage and articulate this well.

Clarity on who to engage with – It's also important to consider which communities we're engaging with, to avoid preaching to the converted and to seek to engage communities that may be harder to reach, but where engagement will be fruitful for all.

The workshop also identified a number of challenges or barriers which have to be borne in mind as a long-term strategy for engagement is developed. Five key points were made:

- *Resources; measuring success; maintaining engagement; differing priorities and scale of engagement (e.g. local versus strategic).*

So what next? There was a clear view from our strategic leaders, reinforced by the speaker from Police Scotland, that improved, strategically managed and well executed community engagement is crucially important for SEPA - both to deliver its vision and outcomes and the Scottish Government's aspirations. The following proposed key next steps have emerged:

- i. Develop a strategy for community engagement ensuring clarity of purpose, drivers, outcomes, methods and including how to develop capacity for, and a culture of, engagement.
- ii. Develop an action plan to ensure we embrace and embed both the spirit and letter of the Community Empowerment Bill (and Act, when enacted).
- iii. Identify an opportunity to trial the deliberative methods approach, based on the learning to date, e.g. an upcoming complex licence review.
- iv. Identify a problem site or issue to trial new, innovative engagement approaches with local communities: this could also include deliberative approaches to help understand and resolve a "wicked" type problem.
- v. Explore the possibility and feasibility of planning for co-production of our next Corporate Plan.

This is just the beginning of a process. We should enter it with eyes wide open to the risks of poor engagement either having negative consequences or absorbing big resources. But the potential benefits are great and long lasting.

1. THE ENVIRONMENT

1.1 Hydrology/Water

1.1.1 Loch Ryan Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW)/Port Rodie Sewage Pumping Station

A SEPA/Scottish Water meeting was held to discuss progress with the Loch Ryan Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) and the associated Port Rodie Sewage Pumping Station (SPS). The treatment works has been operational since December 2013, however there have been issues with the pumps at the Port Rodie SPS which have delayed the project. These are now largely resolved which means that Phase II can be progressed. Phase I removed the continuous primary treated effluent discharge from Stranraer Settlement Tanks to Loch Ryan in addition to pumping discharges serving Leswalt and Kirkcolm to a new secondary treatment works to the North Channel. Phase II will provide the required storm storage at the SPS and result in the outfall being re-located out with the marina at Stranraer. This phase of the works is programmed to be completed by the end of October 2014.

At the request of Cromarty Firth District Salmon Fishery Board, a meeting was arranged with SSE to discuss freshets on the River Orrin Section of the Conon Hydro Scheme. This is likely to lead to a mini research project to explore more flexible ways to deliver the freshets from Orrin Dam. The current freshet arrangements are considered to be one of the limiting factors in attracting and moving fish in the Orrin system.

1.1.2 Glenfarg Incident

On 14 May SEPA responded to multiple reports of a pollution incident in Glenfarg. As a result of the reports a number of officers from Fife and Perth attended and traced the source of the spill. The subsequent investigation used staff from Fife, Perth and Stirling teams. Senior SEPA staff also attended a Problem Assessment Group (PAG) and several Risk Management Groups (RMG) chaired by Dr Jackie Hyland Consultant in Public Health Medicine. Evidence continues to be analysed and collated.

1.1.3 Dalgety Bay, Donibristle Bay, Braefoot Bay and St David's Harbour, Fife

A CAR Enforcement Notice was served on Scottish Water (SW) requiring them to collect and remove sewage related debris (SRD) from the shore of the Firth of Forth at Dalgety Bay, Donibristle Bay, Braefoot Bay and St David's Harbour, by 13 June 2014. SEPA met with SW on the morning of 19 June 2014, to inspect the above areas and assess compliance with the terms of the Notice. While it was apparent that Scottish Water had made considerable effort to remove SRD from these areas and that the situation had improved from a number of months ago, deposits of SRD (primarily wipes) were still visible in certain areas of the foreshore.

1.1.4 Clatto Reservoir, Dundee

Blue green algae colonies were detected at Clatto Reservoir, Dundee in a sample taken on 17 June 2014. This is a recurring problem at this site. SEPA will continue to monitor the situation and should threshold levels be exceeded the local Environmental Health Department will erect warning notices to ensure that members of the public are aware of the risks present.

1.1.5 The Water Environment Fund Annual Report

The Water Environment Fund spent £2,024,088, against a total fund of £2,030,000 in 2013/14 to enable the following environmental improvements to be made across Scotland:

- Seven ground works projects to restore channels impacted by engineering.

- Eight scoping studies to remove or ease barriers to fish migration and nine scoping studies to restore channels impacted by engineering.
- Control of bankside invasive non-native plant species in 14 fishery trust areas across Scotland.

Funded projects also brought about wider benefits to designated nature conservation sites, local fisheries and community amenity and urban green space creation. Water Environment Funding has helped to lever additional funds and contributions in kind from key partners. By working in partnership with local authorities, landowners and managers, contractors, local communities and volunteers, the Water Environment Fund has helped to build a greater understanding of the need for river restoration in Scotland and the techniques available to achieve it. This information was submitted to the Scottish Government in the Water Environment Fund annual report for 2013/14.

1.1.6 Scottish Water Environmental Performance

Scottish Water has improved its performance against key wastewater targets for the third successive year. In an annual report, the water company confirmed that it has achieved its best ever results in two key performance indicators for wastewater management. The number of wastewater treatment works failing licensed discharge standards decreased from two in 2012-13 to one in 2013-14, against a Scottish Water target of 18. The number of environmental pollution incidents arising from Scottish Water assets has also decreased from 331 in 2012/13 to 265 in 2013/14. This represents a significant improvement over previous years when there were frequently more than 800 incidents in a year. It reflects the continuing focus by Scottish Water management on preventative measures and strategic capital, maintenance and operational efforts.

1.2 Ecology

1.2.1 The Stirling Ecosystems Approach Project

The Stirling Ecosystems Approach Project which was designed and funded by SEPA and SNH, won an award for planning excellence from the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) on the 23rd June. The project, which was recognised for its innovative approach to local engagement and decision making, explored the use of ecosystem services concepts to help a panel of local stakeholders engage with decisions about land use and land management. The ecosystem services concept helped the panel to explore the multiple benefits they obtain from land and how these might change in the future. The RTPI judges were impressed by the way in which the project's approach to looking at future land management options identified, but effectively managed, inevitable tensions over land use across a range of issues, and was supported by a body of evidence. SEPA and SNH hope that many of the project's findings about local engagement will be taken forward by the Scottish Government in further implementation of the Land Use Strategy. The project was implemented by Land Use Consultancy and Star Development group over an 18 month period and, since it finished, the local stakeholder panel has become constituted as a group in its own right and is working to implement the action plan it developed.

1.2.2 VALUES - Valuing Land Use change and Ecosystem Services

SEPA has entered into a partnership with Scottish-Hydro Electric Transmission (SHE Transmission) on a project funded by the Defra Technology Strategy Board. This one year project, VALUES, aims to develop a geographic information system (GIS) tool to help determine and appraise routes for infrastructure projects, such as new pylons. It will build consideration of ecosystems and their services into selection of the route by deriving potential services from bio-physical characteristics, cultural and management information. It takes account of the sensitivity of the ecosystems to change from the development, and the likely change to services. It will compare selected routes using an evaluation of these effects. The project will develop a means of considering the potential effects on ecosystem services before the formal environmental impact assessment required by planning, and will help with discussions with stakeholders at

the route selection stage. SEPA has worked with SHE Transmission to develop the method. The partnership is now refining the method, gathering data to build the GIS model, and consulting with stakeholders. We anticipate that the GIS tool will have wider application within SEPA's Embedding Ecosystem Services Project, and will be made available for use by other developers.

1.3 Air, Industry and Carbon Reduction

1.3.1 Oil spill St Kilda

The Hebrides and Central Highlands team were notified by the MoD that one of the tanks at their bulk fuel storage farm on St Kilda had suffered a leak spilling 49,000 litres of fuel to the tank farm bund, where all the spilled material was contained. The MoD has confirmed that all the remaining contents of the damaged tank and all contents spilled to the bund have been recovered and are now stored in another tank within the tank farm. St Kilda is a World Heritage site and any spill of this size may have caused significant environmental damage; this is a good demonstration of the need for, and effectiveness of, secondary containment of oils.

1.3.2 Carbon Capture – Peterhead Power Station

The plan for a full-scale carbon capture plant at Peterhead Power Station has moved into the next stage of design. Front End Engineering Design (FEED), and SEPA's North Technical Support Unit (TSU), with the support of policy, science and other TSU colleagues, has provided detailed advice to the developer on the assessment of predicted emissions to air and the optimisation of design of the plant to minimise environmental impact.

1.3.3 Resource Efficiency HARMS project (connected to reduction in GHG)

A small project team has begun work to support the achievement of the AOP 2014-15 priority "championing sustainable resource use" (and "acting to combat climate change") and the GHG-reduction Harms project. The team is resourced by representatives from the three TSU, local operations, Waste Policy and Environmental Advice & Engagement teams. The focus initially is to ensure SEPA is meeting one of our statutory duties in regard to driving PPC sites towards resource efficiency. The project is looking to address the issue of gathering appropriate data from sites with regard to resource utilisation and developing a framework for SEPA to make use of these data to generate improvements across Scotland.

1.3.4 Carbon Dioxide in Houses at Gorebridge, Midlothian: Innovative Approach to Gas Sampling and Analysis

SEPA has contributed to the work of a multi-agency Incident Management Team that was set up to respond to a case where some householders in Gorebridge were suffering ill-health effects, considered to be associated with elevated levels of carbon dioxide in their [homes](#). The elevated levels of in-house carbon dioxide were thought to have been caused by the migration of the gas from the former mine-workings underlying the homes. SEPA was asked if it could help to test this hypothesis and confirm the source of the gas.

SEPA staff developed and carried out a novel programme of sampling and analysis of air within two of the affected homes. This involved the measurement of carbon dioxide and some other gases within the homes and (via the NERC Radiocarbon Facility in East Kilbride) the carbon dating of the carbon dioxide sampled. This study detected high levels of carbon dioxide and low levels of oxygen within the living space of the homes and, most importantly, identified that most of the carbon dioxide was of ancient origin. This finding supports the hypothesis that the elevated levels of carbon dioxide in the homes was caused by the migration of the gas from the former mine-workings.

1.3.5 3rd Tight and Shale Gas Summit Conference

SEPA presented on its Regulatory Guidance for Shale Gas and Coal bed Methane at the 3rd Tight and Shale Gas Summit Conference in Edinburgh on 11 and 12 June. Presentations were also given by Murdo Fraser (MSP) Convenor of the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee; Michael Schut, DG Energy in the EC; Dan Byles, the Chairman of the UK's All Party Parliamentary Group; DLA Piper, DART Energy's lawyers, as well as by industry and academics.

1.4 Radioactive Substances

1.4.1 Site Inspection Work and Radioactive Substances Act (RSA) Compliance Dounreay

In March, SEPA was notified by Dounreay Site Restoration Limited (DSRL) about a potential issue in relation to a fuel can within a pond in the Prototype Fast Reactor (PFR) facility. DSRL advised that it is believed that a fuel can had been damaged and, as a result, there was a potential for the release of activity into the pond water and a potential for gaseous discharges of Krypton-85 and tritium to have occurred from the facility's authorised discharge stack. Based on the operator's information the maximum activity of these radionuclides present within the fuel can, and the gaseous discharges of these radionuclides which may have occurred as a result of the damage to the fuel can, are well below the authorised limits. SEPA has concluded its investigation of this matter and has written to DSRL to request that they undertake a detailed review of the site's arrangements for the sampling of authorised discharges.

In May DSRL notified SEPA about an incident involving the ignition of a small quantity of waste within a waste handling cell. The initiator of the fire was a faulty light that had been changed and put on a work surface adjacent to the waste. Based on the monitoring data provided by DSRL there is no indication of release of activity to the environment as a result of this incident.

During May the Radioactive Substances Unit Manager attended the Dounreay site and met with the DSRL Managing Director. SEPA and DSRL held a number of decommissioning project update meetings during the visit to site in May.

1.4.2 New RSA Authorisation - Hunterston A

SEPA has determined the application made by Magnox Limited (Magnox) for an authorisation for the disposal of radioactive waste arising from the decommissioning of the Hunterston A site. The new authorisation comes into force on 1 July 2014 and replaces the three existing authorisations currently held by Magnox. The annual authorised limits for the disposal of liquid waste have been significantly reduced, while gaseous discharge limits remain at the same level. SEPA reached its determination having taken into account the responses made to its consultations, information provided by the operator, international recommendations on radiological protection and Government policy. SEPA concluded that the limitations and conditions contained in the authorisation will, if adhered to, effectively protect human health, the safety of the food chain and the environment generally.

1.4.3 Transfrontier Shipment of Radioactive Waste

In June SEPA issued DSRL with a new Transfrontier Shipment Authorisation for the shipment of cemented radioactive waste from Dounreay to Belgium. The Authorisation relates to the return of radioactive waste which arose from the reprocessing of spent fuel which was previously undertaken at Dounreay.

1.4.4 Dalgety Bay

Following the publication of the Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE) 15th Report on 19 May, Fife Council assisted SEPA in the commissioning and installation of further signs at Dalgety Bay as recommended by the committee. COMARE are content with the new signs.

The Dalgety Bay Implementation Group Meeting met again on 12 June where it was provided with an update of the MoD's progress to identify a long term management option for the site by end of June 2014. The MoD stated that it was on course to deliver the option by the end of June. The implementation group includes SEPA, MoD, Fife Council, and the affected landowners. SEPA continues to work with the MoD to develop potential long term management options for Dalgety Bay which will allow the contaminated areas of the foreshore to be remediated. We continue to be engaged with the MoD on studies which will allow that to be identified and we are supportive of this work. In mid-July, the MoD published a preferred option for remediation works at Dalgety Bay which is now under consideration.

SEPA's Radioactive Substances (RS) staff supported Scottish Water's contractors in a further beach clean of the foreshore at Dalgety Bay on 10 June to remove sewage related debris. A further round of clean-up was scheduled for 18 July and SEPA RS staff will support Scottish Water's contractor. It is anticipated that this will be the last round of work for the time being.

1.4.5 EDF

EDF has applied for variations to the RSA93 authorisations held for Torness and Hunterston B power stations. In summary, the applications request greater flexibility for the disposal of radioactive waste. The determination process for these applications includes several consultation stages. SEPA completed the first stage of consultation with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Scottish Government and started its wider [consultation](#) with relevant public bodies/organisations and the general public at the beginning of July.

SEPA continues to work with the Environment Agency on EDF matters of mutual interest including the review of discharges and failed fuel.

I attended a meeting at Torness with Gwen Parry-Jones, EDF's Director of Safety & Assurance accompanied by the site's senior management, along with SEPA's Janice Milne and Keith Hammond. We took the opportunity to visit the waste management facility and the seawater intakes.

1.4.6 Joint Inspection of the Nuvia SITA Ltd Descaling Facility

SEPA staff from both the Radioactive Substances Unit and the North TSU undertook a joint inspection of the Nuvia SITA NORM Ltd descaling facility in order to ensure greater consistency across the Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM) descaling industry.

1.5 Waste

1.5.1 Glasgow Recycling and Renewable Energy Centre, Polmadie, Glasgow

Following a thorough determination of an application for a PPC Part A permit, to operate a Materials Recycling Facility, Anaerobic Digester and an incineration (gasification) plant at the above site in Glasgow, SEPA will soon publish the draft permit and decision document as part of the Public Participation Directive process. The SEPA Board recently visited the site with Glasgow City Council and Viridor (Glasgow) Limited.

The relevant documents including a non-technical summary, when published, will be found on our [website](#).

1.5.2 Fly Complaints, Grangemouth

The Falkirk and Stirling team has received new complaints regarding an unacceptable level of flies from residents in Grangemouth. Following receipt of these complaints, officers have attended both the Dows RDF store at Grangemouth docks and the Abbotsinch transfer station. A low level of insect activity was noted at the dock site and SEPA has taken steps to bring this to the attention of the licence holder, so that pro-active treatment can be taken to prevent this escalating. However, officers did confirm larger numbers of flies within the main processing shed at the Abbotsinch site, operated by Oran Environmental Services. Inspections of the Abbotsinch facility during May and June 2014, including a full audit, have identified some recurring issues that have the potential to negatively impact the effectiveness of pest control. SEPA has highlighted these issues to the licence holder who has been asked to provide proposals for improvement and, in the interim, has increased the frequency of visits and insecticide application by a qualified pest control contractor. SEPA will continue to monitor the site closely over the next few weeks and may take further enforcement action to secure compliance with licence conditions. We will keep residents informed via our website page.

1.5.3 Odour Complaints at Drumcross Farm, Erskine

SEPA received over 250 complaints regarding offensive odour from the storage of untreated sewage sludge at Drumcross Farm, Erskine over the period of 16 June 2014 to 8 July 2014. The sludge, stored under an exemption under Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 1 to the Waste Management Licensing (Scotland) Regulations 2011, was to be spread in accordance with the Sludge (Use in Agriculture) Regulations 1989 at the farm. This has been a common agricultural practice for many years - as the sludge is of benefit as a fertiliser when spread on land in accordance with good practice.

SEPA officers confirmed offensive odours on a number of occasions and, as a result, SEPA served:

- a notice to remove the registered exemption;
- a notice under Section 59 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, as amended to remove the waste by 25 July 2014 (note that 21 days is the minimum timescale); and
- a final warning letter.

James McCaig Farms started removing the waste from storage on Tuesday 8 July and, on that and the following day, they spread and ploughed the sludge on land on the farm. This resulted again in SEPA receiving in excess of 250 complaints over those two days; however this phase moved the offensive odour nuisance within the statutory nuisance remit of the local authority. On Friday 18 July SEPA carried out a cross-compliance inspection under the Sludge (Use in Agriculture) Regulations 1989 at the farm and found no evidence of any breaches which may have resulted in pollution.

SEPA and Renfrewshire Council have collaborated closely, during the period from the storage of the sludge to its spreading, as both parties are committed to partnership working as a matter of good practice to protect the interests of local communities, especially on issues like this where the regulatory controls for different activities are closely linked.

1.6 Enforcement action

1.6.1 Statutory Appeals lodged/concluded/decided to 30 June 2014

On 5 February 2014 Scotgen (Dumfries) Ltd withdrew two appeals lodged against a PPC enforcement notice and a PPC revocation notice in relation to the Dargavel Energy from Waste Facility, Lockerbie Road, Dumfries (PPC permit reference PPC/A/1022412).

On 8 April 2014 the Scottish Ministers issued its decision on the appeal by Oran Environmental Solutions Ltd under section 43(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 against the decision by SEPA on 12 September 2013 to issue two Notices of Modification to Waste Management Licence WML/E/120034. The Reporter upheld the appeal to the extent that he required some conditions to be modified, but otherwise upheld the modifications subject to all other conditions. The waste management licence relates to the Abbotsinch Materials Recycling Facility. To quote the Reporter at paragraph 68 of the decision "Subject to the changes detailed below, I do not consider that the new and modified conditions in the 2 modifications are excessive, disproportionate or unduly onerous. I have amended or deleted some of the proposed conditions which I consider to be onerous or set unrealistic timescales, but I recognise that others are rigorous and seek to achieve high standards of operation on the site. Nonetheless I think that it is for the appellant to ensure that its management, operations and systems are designed to achieve those standards; and that, if this is done, compliance with the WML conditions can be achieved."

On 15 April 2014 the Scottish Ministers dismissed the appeal under Regulation 50 of the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 from Alastair J Gordon in relation to Culter Dam, Peterculter, Aberdeen (CAR/S/1038373/VN01). The appeal was against a SEPA imposed condition requiring a fish pass to be installed at the site. The Ministers upheld the need for a fish pass to be installed but extended the period for installation to be completed from 30 June 2014 to 30 September 2014.

On 17 April 2014, SEPA received an appeal against a SEPA initiated variation notice served under Regulation 23(3) of the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 from Meridian Salmon Farms Limited in relation to the West Fara Fish Farm site, Orkney (CAR/L/1004229).

On 14 April 2014, SEPA received an appeal against a SEPA initiated variation notice served under Regulation 23(3) of the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 from Meridian Salmon Farms Limited in relation to the Chalmers Hope Fish Farm site, Orkney (CAR/L/1003062).

On 2 June 2014, SEPA was informed that the Scottish Ministers had dismissed the appeal under Regulation 50 of the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 from Mr Basford in relation to a micro hydro power installation at Mill of Elrick Fish Farm, Auchnagatt, by Ellon (CAR/L/1089805) and affirmed the SEPA initiated variation notice which was the subject of the appeal. The variation notice amended a condition of the Water Use licence requiring a certain hands-off flow rate. The decision of the Scottish Ministers followed a hearing on the appeal, and site visit, on 24 April 2014.

1.6.2 Criminal Sentences imposed to 30 June 2014

On 17 April 2014, at Perth Sheriff Court following a deferred sentence period, Derek Davidson was sentenced to a 100 hour community payback order having pled guilty to two charges following a part heard trial on a previous date. The charges related to the discharge of sewage to the Middleton Burn, and carrying and disposing of waste and failure to prevent the escape of the waste.

On 14 May 2014, at Dunfermline Sheriff Court, Ernest McPherson was sentenced to a 6 month restriction of liberty order. The order stipulates that Mr McPherson must be in his home between the hours of 9pm and 5am. He had pled guilty to a charge under s33(1)(b) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, relating to the keeping of household, industrial and commercial waste at Wee Mary Bing, Wester Cartmore Farm, Lochgelly, Fife over a number of years.

1.6.3 Appeals against sentence decided to 30 June 2014

On 27 May 2014 the Court of Appeal reduced the fine initially imposed on Scotbeef Limited at Stirling Sheriff Court in February 2014 from £26,250 to £16,500. The fine had been imposed following the company pleading guilty to failing to comply with an enforcement notice and a permit under the Pollution Prevention and Control (Scotland) Regulations 2000 and the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999.

1.7 Planning, Advice and Engagement

1.7.1 Land at Ravenscraig, North Lanarkshire

Ravenscraig Limited has submitted a planning application to North Lanarkshire Council for construction works associated with remediation of groundwater in bedrock. SEPA's consultation response requested that conditions be applied. Liaison with North Lanarkshire Council is on-going regarding conditions attached to any planning approval. Submission of the planning application represents a major step forward in addressing the issue of historical contamination in bedrock at the former steelworks site.

1.7.2 Greenburn Surface Coal Mine, New Cumnock

The second and final permanent diversion of a 600 metre stretch of the river Nith, New Cumnock was completed at Greenburn Surface Coal Mine (operator – Kier Mining) on 16 June 2014. With SEPA Dumfries and Galloway Operations staff in attendance, the successful tie in process to the live Nith channel represented the end of a number of years of engagement, discussion and licensing with the operator and a number of stakeholders. The new channel will now continue to be monitored over a number of years.

1.7.3 Containment Guidance

Specialist officers in the South West have been engaging and working with other UK regulators, industry and stakeholders during the revision of the CIRIA 164 publication on containment systems. This has now been updated, re-numbered (C736) and has a new title "Containment systems for the prevention of pollution".

The document is relevant to industrial, commercial, agricultural and other sectors of all sizes and provides a framework for identifying and managing risks associated with storages of substances which may be hazardous to the environment. The key messages are that the operator should understand the hazards and risks associated with the substances handled and apply a proportionate response to managing that risk. It provides guidance on secondary and tertiary containment and on assessing, maintaining, inspecting and upgrading the systems that are already in place as well as design guidance for new build.

1.7.4 Infant Cremation Commission Report

On Tuesday 17 June the Scottish Government published the final report from the Infant Cremation Commission. The Commission had been set up by the Scottish Government following the Edinburgh baby ashes incident to consider the current policies guidance and practice in Scotland in relation to the handling of all recoverable remains following the cremation of babies - a term which covers stillbirth, neo-natal and non-viable fetuses - and to make recommendations for improvement. These activities are regulated by SEPA as a PPC Part B activity. SEPA had originally provided support and comment on the regulation and practice of cremation to the former Lord Advocate of Scotland, the Rt Hon Dame Elish Angiolini, who had been tasked with carrying out an investigation into baby cremation at Mortonhall Crematorium. This investigation led to the publication of the Mortonhall Investigation Report.

Following the publication of this report, SEPA was approached by Lord Bonomy who was tasked by the Scottish Government with carrying out investigations and producing the final report of the infant cremation commission. Following email and

telephone communications, Lord Bonomy met with SEPA staff and we continued to provide support.

The Commission report put forward 64 recommendations, all of which were accepted fully by the Scottish Government. One of the 64 recommendations relates in part to SEPA control and this will be addressed by the formation of a Scottish Government committee with oversight responsibilities for this sector.

1.7.5 Dart Energy Appeal

Following the hearing session on 31 March, SEPA has commented on the closing submissions given by the applicant. Two dates have been identified when the inquiry might reopen to hear evidence in relation to policy statements on unconventional gas which have been published in the new Scottish Planning Policy document (published 23 June).

2. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

2.1 Scottish Engagement

2.1.1 Royal Highland Show (RHS), SEPA Participation

Along with the Chairman, SEPA staff again participated in the RHS this year. SEPA staff (in the SEARS tent) were involved in encouraging people, children mostly, to participate in the 'Active Scotland' area, where they could play the Nintendo Wii while they appeared on a background consisting of an interactive natural environment using the method of a green screen. This looked like that they were interacting with the background that appeared behind them, i.e. birds pecking them, cows licking the screen and a moving nature trail. The participants enjoyed seeing themselves appear on the screen with the background and interacting with the theme. The officer also spoke to the public regarding SEPA issues, and met with other participants from the SEARS groups.

This year the SEARS tent at the RHS looked impressive with the theme of 'Year of Homecoming 2014' which included areas encouraging gold medal walks in urban and rural areas, computerised mountain bike simulators, pre-prepared backgrounds for 'selfies' to dress up as a SEPA officer or forester, and a chef from Masterchef carrying out cooking demonstrations with Scotland's produce.

2.1.2 Dundee Team

The team was represented at a Commonwealth Games workshop along with colleagues in Resilience in preparation for the shooting events that will be held at Barry Buddon.

2.1.3 Riverside Caravan Park, Dollar

SEPA was notified in November 2013 of bank re-grading works to install gabion baskets at the Riverside Caravan Park south of Dollar, adjacent to the River Devon. A retrospective planning application has been submitted to Clackmannanshire Council for the works at the bank. As the embankment is not yet completed, a CAR licence will be required. An OME was subsequently received from Keith Brown MSP and a meeting was arranged for 18th June 2014. Two SEPA officers attended the meeting on site along with Clackmannanshire Council, Community Council, local residents and the director of the caravan park. Issues were addressed that had been raised by the local residents and Community Council relating to drainage and flood issues.

2.1.4 Vision in Business for the Environment for Scotland (VIBES) Awards

Launch events for the VIBES Awards have been continuing. An event was held in conjunction with Green Business Fife on 6 July where 16 businesses attended a breakfast meeting. An event was also held in Edinburgh on 23 June to promote the Hydro Nation award and the partnership between VIBES and WaterAid. Meetings

have been arranged with various chambers of commerce to discuss working in partnership to further promote VIBES in the business community. Applications for VIBES closed on 11 July.

2.1.5 NetRegs

Over 1000 individual courses have been completed online from the five e-learning tools that NetRegs produced at the start of 2014; Duty of Care for Waste (Scotland) being the most popular with over 400 users. The new “self-assessment tool” is on course to be completed and put online by the end of July.

The number of subscribers to the monthly NetRegs email update continues to grow, with the total from Scotland reaching 3300.

The number of visits to the website has increased by 10% between March and April and by 9.4% between April and May. Again similar to the e-learning tools, waste topics have been the most popular; for example over 5000 visits were made to the page “How to complete a waste transfer note” during the 3 month period.

The NetRegs team is currently carrying out research into the development of two NetRegs mobile applications that will provide environmental guidance for businesses within the agricultural and construction sectors. It has been identified that, over the past three months, nearly 20% of the total visitors to NetRegs had visited from a mobile ‘phone or tablet.

2.1.6 Environmental Crime Event

On 20 June 2014, SEPA and the Environmental Crime Taskforce for Scotland (ECTF) agreed to sponsor an Environmental Crime Conference on 26 November in Edinburgh with a focus on waste crime that will involve keynote addresses from Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment and the Lord Advocate, Frank Mulholland QC, together with ECTF representatives.

2.1.7 Green Growth

The Scottish Energy Advisory Board (SEAB) endorsed the delivery of the Green Growth Action Plan at their meeting on 16 May. The Action Plan encompasses four themes; Water and waste water treatment, Environmental sensing, Circular economy and Sustainable food production. The Plan sets out the nine individual projects that have been identified within the four themes, with a co-ordinating partner for each project and support from other relevant partners.

A Programme Board is being established for a time-limited 24-month period in order to help accelerate the pace of delivery of low carbon opportunities and help stimulate economic recovery. It brings together representatives of existing Industry Leadership Groups, relevant Innovation Centres and other bodies, such as Hydro Nation, and main public sector bodies including Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, SEPA, Zero Waste Scotland and the Scottish Government. The Programme Board will be supported by a working group representing the main public sector delivery bodies. SEPA will continue to offer secretariat and co-ordination support to the Programme Board through Fiona Whyte. David Sigsworth will represent SEPA on the Programme Board.

2.1.8 Flood Risk Management Act Lead local Authority Forum

To support the delivery of Scotland’s first Flood Risk Management Strategies and Local Flood Risk Management Plans a network of groups has been established to facilitate partnership working and the sharing of expertise and knowledge across SEPA and the responsible authorities. The lead local authority forum, a key group in this network, met in June. It provides an environment to share knowledge, resources and experiences and also keep national consistency in the delivery of flood risk management planning across the 14 Local Plan Districts in Scotland.

2.1.9 FCERM Assembly

Members of SEPA's Strategic Flood Risk Team presented at the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Network Annual Assembly which took place in June at Heriot-Watt University. The event provided an opportunity to share the work the team delivered to produce SEPA's flood maps and also brought together researchers and research-users to identify areas of interest and collaboration.

2.2 National Engagement

2.2.1 United Kingdom Forest Products Association (UKFPA) Seminar

On 28th May 2014, four SEPA staff attended a UKFPA Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Seminar in Stirling. There were approximately 24 delegates present from various private forestry companies and organisations along with representation from Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and Forest Research. SEPA staff delivered 3 presentations covering diffuse pollution and associated regulations, the forestry harms project and practical management on the ground and a RBMP overview. It was clearly evident that the majority of the private companies had little or no knowledge or awareness of what diffuse pollution actually is, or of the requirements of the current legislation that they should be adhering to. There was useful and constructive discussion throughout the day on a variety of Policy and Guidance issues. Contractors present raised a particular concern on the current FCS Policy on brush matting sizing with a higher risk scenario of diffuse pollution created by using undersized matting. FCS said they would take the concerns raised by contractors on board and revisit some of the existing policies. This was a very useful event which may result in more requests being received from the private forestry sector for SEPA-led training/site visits.

2.2.2 Information Sharing Protocol

On 30 May 2014 at the Scottish Crime Campus, Gartcosh, an Information Sharing Protocol (ISP) was signed between SEPA and the Police Service of Scotland by Executive Director Calum MacDonald and Assistant Chief Constable Nicolson from Police Scotland. The ISP provides the framework to enhance the already close working arrangements in place between Police Scotland and SEPA that will support the joint mapping and intelligence development of Serious Organised Crime Groups (SOCG) within the waste industry - which we believe is a key requirement to better understand and tackle this threat.

2.2.3 Natural Resources Wales

The Flood Forecasting and Warning team hosted a visit by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) flood forecasting staff. The visit was to inform the ongoing review of services in Wales since the formation of NRW and is an example of our continued liaison with our UK counterparts. Through this visit the team could understand SEPA's current levels of service for flood forecasting and warning; gain an overview of the systems used (FEWS Scotland and HTK Horizon); and understand how we work with the Met Office to provide the Scottish Flood Forecasting Service.

2.2.4 "Frontiers in Air Quality Science": MRC-PHE Symposium celebrating 21 years of air quality research at King's College, London

SEPA attended this symposium at King's College, London (KCL) on 23rd and 24th June. This was an excellent event that covered a wide range of inter-related topics and involved speakers from around the world. The symposium illustrated the growing body of evidence on the health effects of air pollutants, the limitations of existing air policies and objectives, and continuing advancements in the monitoring and modelling of emissions, air quality, and exposure.

2.3 International Engagement

2.3.1 Green Week, Brussels

Following an invitation from the President of the European Small Business Alliance (ESBA), Gillian Bruce visited Brussels in June to discuss opportunities for the internationalisation of NetRegs. Having heard positive feedback from the Federation of Small Business on the guidance NetRegs provides to help businesses with less than 250 employees comply with legislation, ESBA is keen to see if the model can be replicated in other European countries. ESBA will canvass members to gauge interest as the next step. Should the geographic spread of NetRegs be extended, it will be easier for Scottish businesses to identify differences in legislative requirements in other countries, helping those with multiple sites and also supporting export opportunities. Since there are many users of NetRegs based in India, discussions have also begun with Asia Scotland to explore partnership and commercial opportunities for setting up NetRegs further afield.

While Gillian Bruce was in Brussels for the ESBA meeting she also attended the Green Week conference. The theme this year was the circular economy, resource efficiency and waste. Gillian also participated in a side-event hosted at Scotland Europa where SEPA's roles in the Scottish Resource and Energy Efficiency Service and NetRegs were promoted. Contacts made during Green Week include the Secretariat for the European Business Awards for the Environment who have since asked for an article for their next newsletter explaining SEPA's approach in encouraging environmental best practice. Whilst viewing the exhibition at Green Week, Gillian was filmed asking questions about the benefits of environmental products. This was shown on Irish television.

2.3.2 European Commission Environmental Technology Verification Pilot Programme-Awareness Raising Event DEFRA Nobel House London 17 June

SEPA is represented on the EU Commission Environmental Technology Verification Pilot Programme by Lindsey Green, Advice and Engagement Team. Lindsey participated and helped to organise an awareness raising workshop with DEFRA, the UK verification bodies (including the Water Research Centre and National Physical Laboratory), technology purchasers, developers, academia and Knowledge Transfer Network. The workshop was introduced by Dan Rogerson MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for water, forestry, rural affairs and resource management.

Examples of technologies going through UK Verification Bodies include: A novel filter media to remove phosphate and pathogens from waste water which is ideally suited to small remote treatment plants; renewable energy such as new generation solar energy (thin film, organic PV and PV/thermal hybrid); water disinfection and treatment systems for emergency and small scale use involving a novel gravity-driven membrane system; and a device that removes contamination from surface water runoff from roads and impervious surfaces.

The Commission has highlighted the partnership approach undertaken by the UK as an exemplar to the other member states involved in the pilot programme. DEFRA and SEPA instigated the UK stakeholder group two years ago.

2.3.3 Meeting between the Scottish Urban Air Quality Steering Group and The Netherlands Air Quality Coordination Group

SEPA organised a video conference to help inform the development of Scotland's Low Emission Strategy. It proved to be a very useful exercise providing the Steering Group with a good understanding of the national approach taken by The Netherlands in linking development and air quality. All significant developments have to be included in the national air quality plan and mitigation measures devised to avoid adverse impacts upon air quality. This meeting will be followed up by a workshop with The Netherlands on air quality modelling.

2.3.4 Liaison with Norwegian Authorities on the Regulation of Aquaculture Activities

During a trip to Norway in August 2013, Scotland's Environment and Climate Change Minister, Paul Wheelhouse met with the Norwegian Deputy Fisheries Minister, and an agreement was reached to enhance joint working and information sharing under the Scotland-Norway Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Aquaculture. The closer working arrangements strengthen the ties between the two countries, and involve regular bilateral meetings between Ministers, SG officials, and also specialist staff from relevant agencies. These help to bring both countries up-to-date with current industry developments, and to share best practice and innovative solutions that will encourage good environmental stewardship and the sustainable growth of salmon farming within appropriate environmental capacity limits.

As part of this initiative, SEPA staff visited Bergen in July. They met officials from the Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Food Safety Authority, and the County Governor of Hordaland. They also met with senior managers from Lerøy Seafoods, and visited their Rongøy Marine Fish Farm site in Hjelte Fjord.

The discussions were wide-ranging, and provided useful insight into the latest Norwegian initiatives on aquaculture licensing, and what is being done to combat problems associated with sea lice infections and the escape of farmed fish. Both Norwegian and Scottish participants agreed that the meetings had been very worthwhile, and resolved to maintain closer links on matters of mutual interest.

2.3.5 Interpol Engagement

The waste industry is an inter-connected, global industry and the trafficking of illicit waste has been identified by both Europol and Interpol as one of the key crime areas exploited by organised crime at an international level. On 7 April 2014 within Interpol Headquarters Lyon, France, SEPA attended a training workshop instigated by the Fugitive Investigative Sub-directorate and the Environmental Security Sub-directorate on a joint initiative, entitled 'INFRA TERRA', a global operation directed at tackling international fugitives from around the world wanted for environmental crimes. SEPA presented case study work on the presence of organised crime within the waste industry that sought to raise awareness on this issue to partners on Operation INFRA TERRA and to promote the wider requirement for collaborative work involving Interpol and others.

3. SEPA BUSINESS

3.1 Performance and Quality Management

3.1.1 Annual Operating Plan

Following a review of our framework for performance reporting, a new system of monthly exception reporting was introduced for the Agency Management Team. Each of the performance measures in the Annual Operating Plan will be monitored monthly and exception reports will be produced when:

- performance falls below, or greatly exceeds, expected levels,
- key milestones are missed in project-led measures, and
- time allowed has been exceeded.

In May one exception report was triggered when data showed that we had responded to 95% of environmental incidents and pollution reports within 24 hours; our target is to respond to 96% of incidents within 24 hours. After investigation it was discovered that the fall in performance was due to data entry errors rather than a poor response to our customers. Steps have been put in place to improve data entry.

3.1.2 Quality Management

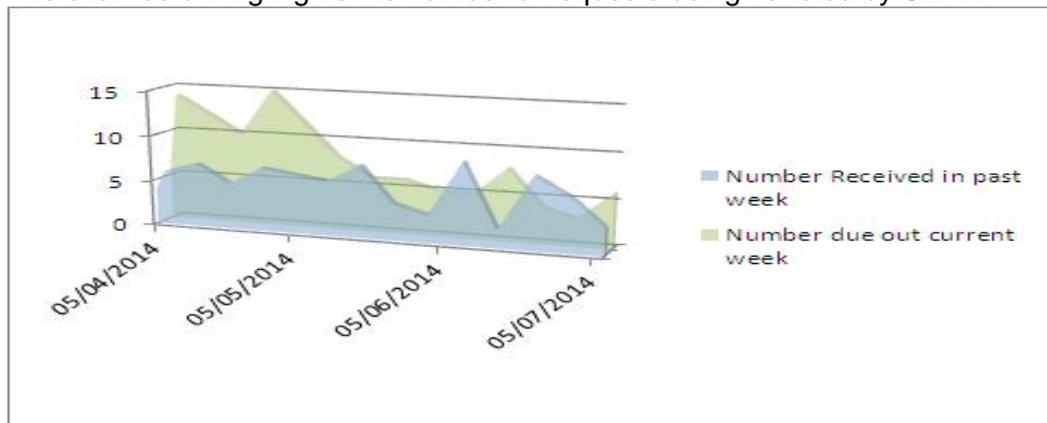
LRQA recently carried out a biannual assessment of our business systems against the ISO 9001 and 14001 standards and recommended continued certification. Some of the continual improvement elements they covered included developments in the risk management process and the SCC's systematic use of performance data to address the root cause of issues and drive improvement in service delivery to their customers. Their next surveillance, at the end of September/early October, is a certificate renewal which takes a fresh look again at the basic requirements of the standards and visits our Stirling, ASB, Edinburgh, Perth, Ayr and Galashiels offices.

We have had a positive start to our UKAS re-assessment against the ISO 17025 standard, having successfully completed audits at Aberdeen, Dingwall, Dumfries, Galashiels and Perth. The audit completes at SEPA's Angus Smith Building this month.

3.1.3 Freedom of Information

Between 3 April 2014 and 7 July 2014, 84 requests were logged and 121 requests were completed. Ten Formal Reviews were logged and five were completed during the reporting period. Additional information was released as an outcome of two Formal Reviews.

The chart below highlights the number of requests being handled by SEPA.



The appeal in relation to the withholding of a Field Development Plan is still ongoing. No Decision Notice was issued as at 7 July 2014.

3.1.4 Customer Service Complaints

The new Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) came into effect on 1 April 2014. There are now three levels of complaints:

Stage 1 – Frontline Resolution

Stage 2 – Investigation

Stage 3 – External Appeal – to Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

Between 3 April 2014 and 7 July 2014 three CHP Stage 2 complaints were logged, which are still ongoing.

Where a complaint had been received before 1 April, the previous complaints process was still applicable. In the reporting period, July 2014, three Stage 2 complaints were logged and completed. Of the three completed complaints, two were not upheld and the third was partially upheld.

The Public Services Ombudsman issued the Decision Notice regarding the ongoing appeal on 14 July 2014. There were four grounds of appeal. The investigation considered four complaints relating to a planning matter. The investigator did not uphold three of the complaints. One of the complaints was upheld, but no recommendation was made, as the investigator was satisfied that SEPA has taken the appropriate action to address this issue.

3.1.5 Customer Service Compliments

During period 27 May and 29 July 2014, 25 compliments have been recorded, 16 from internal and 9 from external sources.

Examples from external sources include a compliment for Planning staff, from a Construction Project Manager who considered the approach of SEPA staff to be excellent, not only in protecting SEPA's position but also meeting with them at the outset to discuss the approach that would be taken, advising very clearly on what was specifically wanted and providing a prompt turnaround.

Following a recent false fire alarm at the Angus Smith Building, Chemistry staff received feedback from the fire services who were very impressed with the information cards provided to them regarding the chemicals held on site. The cards were generated as a result of one of the new programme of health and safety 'risk' audits that were commissioned last year.

SNH complimented the 'great' service and support they received whilst obtaining data from hydrometric staff for an otter study.

3.2 Organisational Development (OD)

The Organisational Development (OD) team continues to deliver a wide range of advice and support in relation to Human Resources, Learning & Development, Health & Safety, Job Evaluation and Equalities.

3.2.1 Improving performance – Appraisal and Development Scheme 2014-15

The 2014 – 2015 staff appraisal scheme was launched in April with Agency Management Team setting a target for 100% of appraisals to be conducted by 30 June 2014. Completed appraisals were logged by the HR team who reported that on 30 June 2014 the final completion rate was 98.55%. Whilst it is encouraging that the great majority of managers met the deadline, AMT will address the performance of a few managers which resulted in the target being narrowly missed. In addition, analysis of distribution of ratings and quality of submissions is underway to provide information to enable Portfolios to make continued improvements in the process and in performance management in general.

3.2.2 Health, Safety and Wellbeing

3.2.2.1 Absence

OD recently reported the FY13-14 annual absence data, which showed a reduction in the lost time rate to 2.25%. As shown below, organisational absence has decreased yearly since comprehensive reporting began in 2010. The reductions can be attributed to more proactive management of absence and SEPA's focus on improving the health and wellbeing of staff.

Year	FY10-11	FY11-12	FY12-13	FY13-14
LTR	4.11%	3.07%	2.41%	2.25%

Stress and anxiety was one of the main causes of absence during the year, accounting for 15.56% of all lost time; however this is a noticeable improvement compared to FY12-13, when stress, anxiety and depression resulted in nearly 25% of

all absence. The proactive approach we are taking to realise improvements in identifying and reducing stress and other mental wellbeing issues will have contributed to this reduction.

Other noticeable absence reasons contributing to lost time during the year were gastro-intestinal, coughs, colds and flu and viral and post-operative.

3.2.2.2 Cycle Friendly Award

Board members will be aware that, following the achievement of the Healthy Working Lives Bronze Award, we are now pursuing the Silver Award. To support our Healthy Working Lives activities, we've also been working towards Cycling Scotland's "Cycle Friendly Employer Award" - this scheme, jointly developed with the Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives, recognises employers who support and encourage cycling.

During early June, Cycling Scotland confirmed that SEPA is the **first** organisation in Scotland to be awarded their new Multi-Site Cycle Friendly Employer Award. This award was formally presented to the Chairman and me by Cycling Scotland on 25 June. The Communications department has placed an article in SEPAView, with an external press release also being circulated.

3.2.3 Equality and Diversity

The Equality and Human Rights Commission invited SEPA, along with 50 other organisations, to an event on improving our Equality Outcomes.

The real benefit of the event was one-to-one feedback on our published outcomes.

The main comments regarding SEPA's published Equality Outcomes focused on an apparent lack of activity plans to deliver change and of any performance reporting mechanism.

Following discussions, the EHRC is now satisfied that activity plans are in place, with a robust performance reporting procedure.

Progress against the Outcomes and in mainstreaming equality into our day-to-day business will be published as planned in April 2015, with renewed emphasis on the resulting benefits for our customers.

3.2.4 Job Evaluation

Development work on SEPA's Job Evaluation (JE) scheme, including the ongoing revision of policies and processes, training for analysts and facilitation of the new JE Panel, is nearing completion and JE cases are now being progressed. A new JE Handbook and intranet page have been developed and are at the point of final approval; it is anticipated these will be launched shortly. The JE Steering and Implementation Board have been liaising with the JE software suppliers to explore options for modernising the JE scheme to ensure it can support the future vision of SEPA.

3.3 Office Accommodation and VDI

3.3.1 In June, the move out of Erskine Court with staff decanted to Strathallan House and Bremner House went well, with no major issues. The keys to the Erskine Court premises have now been handed back to the landlord.

SEPA's decision to invest in Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI), as a means of providing desktop computer access for staff, has helped greatly in the move. With standard PC desktops there would have been significant disruption to staff as their PCs were moved from one place to another. Instead IS staff configured VDI stations on all desks in the decant offices over a weekend and staff were able to turn up first

thing on the Monday and begin working almost immediately. The flexibility afforded by VDI means staff are not tied to a specific desk and are able to work from any of the desks in Bremner House, Strathallan or indeed ASB. Alongside the Stirling office move, IS are continuing a gradual program of rolling out and implementing VDI across all SEPA offices.

3.4 Press Overview

3.4.1 Media coverage

Our communications department has confirmed that between 1 April and 30 June there were 938 articles mentioning SEPA.

There were 165 media enquiries during this time from various print, broadcast and online media.

In terms of subjects the top five for printed articles and media enquiries are as follows:

Printed articles

- Bathing waters
- Unconventional Gas
- Waste
- Water
- Planning

Media enquiries

- Water
- Waste
- Bathing waters
- Air
- Radioactivity

Over the three months 17 media releases were issued by SEPA, 88% of which were used by the media, resulting in 80 articles.

Stories which gained a lot of coverage included:

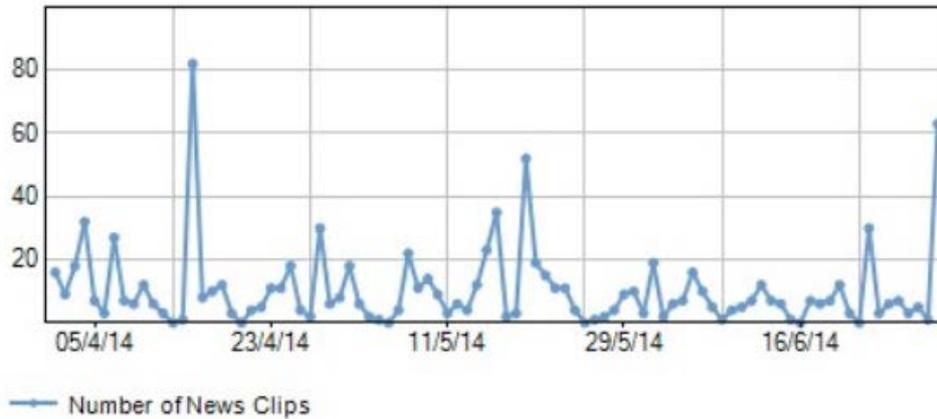
- foam pollution incident in the River Clyde
- 3D sea bed mapping that SEPA is carrying out
- start of the Scottish bathing water season
- chemical pollution in the River Farg
- Dalgety Bay
- launch of Marine Conservation Society's Good Beach Guide
- release of British Geological Society's report into shale gas reserves
- five prosecution releases, resulting in 54 articles.

There were 270 supportive articles (29%), 584 neutral or balanced articles (62%) and 84 critical articles (9%). The unusually high proportion of critical articles, at 9% rather than our more usual rate of about 2%, resulted from the release of the estimates of Scottish shale gas reserves and various commentators querying whether SEPA has sufficient capacity and expertise to provide effective oversight.

There were 27 articles in international media, 238 in national Scottish and UK media, 532 in local Scottish media and 92 in local media across the rest of the UK.



The word cloud to the right shows the most commonly used words in media articles about SEPA. The bigger the word, the more times it has occurred.



This chart shows the amount of coverage over the month. The spike of coverage in April was due to the Good Beach Guide. In May it is due to our release about the 3D seabed map survey being

undertaken by the Sir John Murray. At the end of June it is due to the report on shale gas estimates.

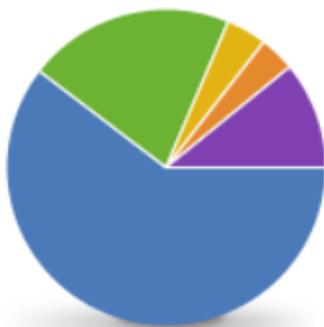
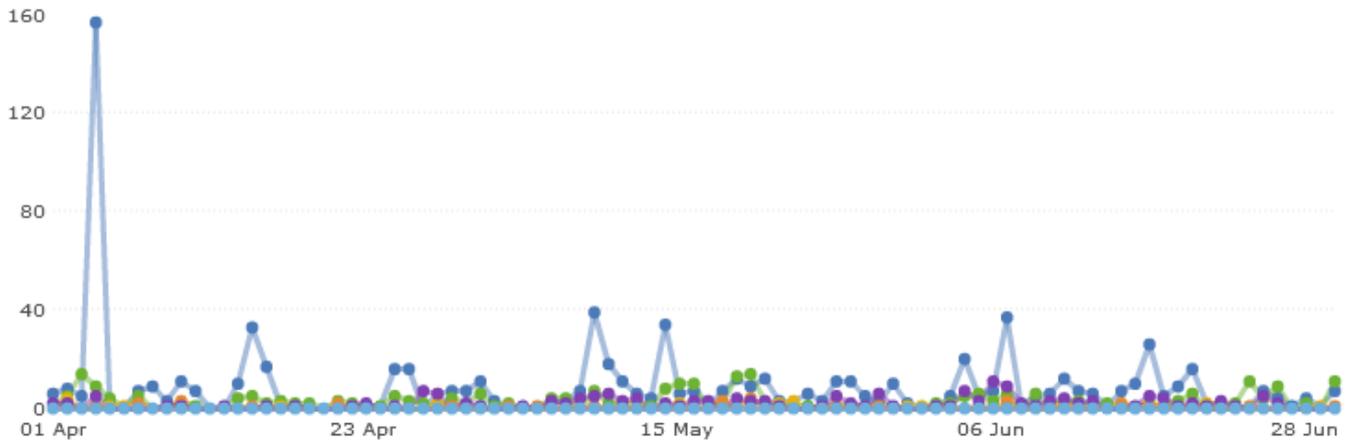
3.4.2 Social media

SEPA's communications team also monitors mentions on social media sites (such as Facebook and Twitter) and online blogs.

The chart below shows the number of mentions about SEPA which occurred between April and June. The spike in activity at the start of April is due to a pollution incident involving foam on the River Clyde, which caused a great deal of interest on social media.

Latest Activity

Showing 1,317 beats from the 91 days for sepa



1,317
Total Mentions

60.3%	Twitter 795 mentions	20.9%	News 276 mentions
4.1%	Forum 54 mentions	3.6%	Blogpost 48 mentions
0%	YouTube 0 mentions	10.9%	Facebook 144 mentions
0%	Instagram 0 mentions		

Sentiment

54% +ve positive 713 mentions **3% -ve** negative 33 mentions



18.9%	flooding 164 mentions	0.7%	air 6 mentions
27.7%	incident 241 mentions	5.6%	land 49 mentions
6.8%	radioactivity 59 mentions	11.0%	waste 96 mentions
29.3%	water 255 mentions		

The chart on the left shows the seven most common topics, which we chart the popularity of, over the three month period. Water includes bathing waters, as we have a limited number of tags.

- Delivery of Science needs you! Edinburgh International Science Festival. This explored citizen science in Scotland – the contribution it makes, the benefits it brings and how to get involved.
- Supported phases one, two and three of the Stirling Office move by issuing three further newsletters, updating the intranet and issuing detailed decant instructions to staff.
- SEPA's presence at the Royal Highland Show; included a special printed edition of SEPAView and various SEPA staff were filmed for a SEARS partners video.
- Design/editorial work on the Annual Report 2013 – 2014.
- Work continues on the development of the new SEPA website. This includes the writing of new procedures, work on the new online library, Contact Us section, an equalities impact assessment, and work was also carried out on the new library tool.
- Editing/scripting on Sir John Murray videos for the 10-year anniversary (1 October 2014).
- SEWeb Communications worked with the BIG Partnership to deliver communication activities for the relaunch of the site. This included developing a range of material: digital brochure, press release, digital newsletter, social media content and infographics.

4. ACTION

- 4.1 The Board is asked to note this report. Verbal updates will be provided at the meeting.

James Curran, Chief Executive
15 July 2014



Updates

This quarter we have had a co-ordinated campaign to launch a range of products associated with SEWeb. Details of these are as follows:

Youth Discussion Competition Awards Ceremony

Nearly 200 young people from throughout Scotland attended an event at Our Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh to be rewarded in recognition of their ideas to improve the local environment. 18 awards were presented by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Paul Wheelhouse, to groups and individuals. The [Youth Discussion initiative](#) was launched in September 2013 by Scotland's Environment Web with the aim of stimulating interest amongst young people in all aspects of Scotland's environment. Staff from SEPA worked closely with Education Scotland, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Young Reporters for the Environment, Young Scot and Scotland's 2020 Group on a competition that challenged young people between the ages of 5-18 to submit original and creative ideas to the question: "What needs to change in your local community that will make a difference to your environment and what role can you play in making it happen?" In response, a huge variety of videos, blogs, photographs, articles and pieces of art work were received and reviewed by judges, following which winners were shortlisted from across all age groups.

Competition entries can be viewed [here](#).

Scotland's 2014 Environment Report

Scotland's 2014 State of Environment Report was published on 5th June – World Environment Day - on a new and improved Scotland's Environment website which has exciting new changes to the design and structure, with updated content, improved features and easy to use tools that help users to view, analyse and visualise data which help explain the State of Environment report's findings. The publication of the 27 State of Environment report topics is a successful collaboration of expert authors from across Scotland's key environmental agencies and Scottish government, and is the first major update since it was last published in November 2011. The State of Environment Report and Scotland's Environment website provides the "authoritative" view of Scotland's Environment in one place.

[New Scotland's environment web site](#)

[SoE Key Messages](#)

[SoE Topics](#)

Scotland's Environment Project Finder

A new tool providing a new matchmaking service between citizen science and action projects, and volunteers was launched on the 2nd July. The new [Project Finder service](#) is an easy to use search feature to help people identify environmental volunteering projects of interest. A UK first for environmental projects, local voluntary groups can register their profile and volunteering opportunities free of charge. Project Finder allows organisations to create a profile with information about who they are and what they do along with details of current projects. Potential volunteers can then browse across a range of topics according to environmental issue, date, location, or whether they're best for family, schools, communities or individuals. On picking and noting interest in a project, the Project Finder tool puts volunteers in contact with the project.

Bathing Waters Spotfire Application

A new discover data application on Scotland's Environment website presents current and historic data on the quality of Scotland's designated bathing waters (current sampling results, sample data and profile) along with additional relevant information from a variety of sources – bathing water forecasts, UKHO tidal predictions, Met Office weather forecast, and Keep Scotland Beautiful beach awards. Users can start by choosing a bathing water they are interested in (My Beach) to see high level, summary information of bathing waters and other related data. As users move through the application, data sets presented provide a more detailed scientific view of sampling data.

Climate Trends Handbook

An updated version of the [Scotland's Climate Trends Handbook](#) is now on Scotland's Environment website. The original climate trends handbook was published in 2006. The resource describes the changes in weather patterns experienced in Scotland over the last century, with many records extending back to 1910. This provides the context against which the changes that are projected for the future may be judged. For each weather variable the handbook presents:

- a graph (time series) showing changes for each year since 1914, 1929, 1961, 1969 or 1971;
- a table summarising average change over the period by each region; and
- a map of the patterns of change over the period for the whole of Scotland.

The [handbook](#) was produced in collaboration with the MetOffice, SEPA, SNH, the Forestry Commission and the Scottish Government.

Public Discussion Toolkit

A public discussion toolkit has been published providing recommended steps for replicating the two public discussion methodologies that were used for the 2013 Scotland's Environment Web public discussion of key issues for Scotland's environment – deliberative workshops and online discussion forum. The [toolkit](#) provides an introduction to the methodologies and describes in detail how to approach each method.

Citizen Science Behavioural Research

The Conservation Volunteers carried out for Scotland's Environment Web, [research](#) that shows that taking part in citizen science projects not only improves volunteers' understanding of the environment, but changes their attitudes towards it and motivates them to take more action to protect it. Key findings show that there are wide ranging benefits of getting more people, of all ages, involved in recording environmental observations.

Academic Search Tool

SEWeb, working in partnership with Aberdeen University and Dot.Rural are looking to develop a product that will use Scotland's Environment website to host a new web based search tool that will expose more academic data, research and expertise to non-academics. The tool will also provide useful information back to researchers and universities on the reach and impact of their research in the non-academic community.

Environmental Education and Citizen Science

SEWeb is working closely with Education Scotland to develop:

- Structured engagement with schools to shape Scotland's Environment Web product development to meet the needs of schools, including for national qualifications.
- Support for extension of citizen science project to 15+ local authorities ensuring that sustainable structures are created within each authority.
- Liaising with Citizen Science Steering Group to form high profile national campaigns to encourage participation in citizen science activities and use of SEWeb.

- Support for new citizen science/SEWeb pilots to encourage innovative use of the web site and products and to model for others how it can be effectively used to support learning and teaching.